DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 409 539 CS 012 865

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TITLE Improving Reading Achievement of First Grade Students by Integrating Phonics Skills into a Whole Language Curriculum.
PUB DATE May 97
NOTE 81p.; M.A. Action Research Project, Saint Xavier University.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses (040) -- Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Action Research; Classroom Research; Grade 1; Instructional Effectiveness; *Phonics; Primary Education; *Reading Ability; *Reading Improvement; *Reading Skills; *Whole Language Approach
IDENTIFIERS Illinois (North)

ABSTRACT

An action research study implemented a program for improving the reading ability of first-grade students who enter school with low reading readiness skills. The targeted population came from a mid-size, middle-class town in northern Illinois that has experienced recent growth and socioeconomic changes. The problem was evidenced by teacher assessment, teacher observation, and standardized test scores. Probable causes for low reading achievement were attributed to the changing demographics of the community, classroom overcrowding, home influences, and curricular issues. District concern was centered on a lack of adequate phonics instruction in the whole language curriculum. After reviewing the solution strategies suggested in the literature and analyzing the problem setting, an intervention was designed to integrate and transfer phonics skills instruction within a whole language curriculum. Post intervention data revealed an increase in letter/sound relationship and phonemic awareness, specifically knowledge of initial and final consonants and vowel sounds. This in turn resulted in improved reading achievement scores. The combination of phonics skills and a whole language curriculum appears to be a "winner" for meeting the needs of all children and improving the reading achievement of first graders. (Contains 18 references and 8 figures of data; appendixes contain a literacy screening packet and roster, evaluation instruments, lesson plans, phonics worksheets, skill drills, a home reading log, a book buddy reading guide and log, and instructions for taking running records.) (Author/RS)

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IMPROVING READING ACHIEVEMENT OF FIRST GRADE STUDENTS BY INTEGRATING PHONICS SKILLS INTO A WHOLE LANGUAGE CURRICULUM

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An Action Research Project Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the

School of Education in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of Masters of Arts in Teaching and Leadership

Saint Xavier University & IRI/Skylight

Field-Based Masters Program

Chicago, Illinois

May, 1997

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ABSTRACT

This report describes a program for improving the reading ability of first grade students who enter school with low reading readiness skills. The targeted population came from a mid-size, middle-class town in northern Illinois that has experienced recent growth and socioeconomic changes. The problem was evidenced by teacher assessment, teacher observation and standardized test scores.

Probable causes for low reading achievement were attributed to the changing demographics of the community, classroom overcrowding, home influences and curricular issues. District concern was centered on a lack of adequate phonics instruction in the whole language curriculum.

After reviewing the solution strategies suggested in the literature and analyzing the problem setting, an intervention was designed to integrate and transfer phonics skills instruction within a whole language curriculum.

Post intervention data revealed an increase in letter/sound relationship and phonemic awareness; specifically knowledge of initial and final consonants and vowel sounds. This in turn resulted in improved reading achievement scores. The combination of phonics skills and a whole language curriculum appears to be a winner for meeting the needs of all children and improving the reading achievement of first graders.

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CHAPTER 1

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND DESCRIPTION OF CONTEXT

Problem Statement

A high percentage of the students in the targeted first grade classroom enter school with low reading-readiness skills, which leads to below average reading ability. This is evidenced by teacher observation, teacher assessment and standardized testing.

Immediate Problem Context

The targeted population is a first grade classroom at an elementary school in a medium size town northwest of Chicago, Illinois. It is a learning disability cluster-classroom, which means that children identified with a learning disability are clustered in that room along with regular education students. There are five first grades at this elementary school. Two of them are learning disability cluster rooms and two of them are English as a Second Language cluster rooms.

The targeted school is one of four elementary schools in a community unit school district. According to the 1995 School Report Card, the enrollment as of September 30, 1994 was 619. The racial/ethnic background of the students reported at that time was: White 84.2%, Black 0.8%, Mexican 12.8%, Asian /Pacific Islander 2.3%, Native American 0.0%. The number of students coming from low income families was 15.7% and 7.9% were limited English proficient and qualified for bilingual education. The student attendance rate was 95.6% and the chronic truancy rate was

0.0%. The number of students who enroll in or leave school during the year (student mobility rate) was 12.5%.

The community as a whole is undergoing growth and this has had considerable impact on the school population. The 1996 enrollment has increased to 702, an increase of 83 in two years. The percentage of low socioeconomic households has increased from 15.4% in 1993 to 23% in 1996.

This elementary school has one principal and 22 classroom teachers in grades one through five. In addition, there are two communication disordered classrooms which each have one teacher. The support personnel staff consists of two learning disabilities teachers, two speech and language therapists, one full-time and one part-time physical education teacher, one part-time art teacher, two part-time music teachers, one social worker/counselor, one part-time psychologist, one part-time behavior specialist, one English as a Second Language teacher, five classroom aides and one inclusion aide. The average teacher at this school has 17 years of teaching experience and 47% of the teachers have a masters degree or above. The non-certified staff consists of two secretaries, three custodians, a library aide, two cooks and a part-time nurse. All personnel at the site school are Caucasian and all are females except for the principal, one of the physical education teachers and the custodians.

The climate at this elementary school is "child-centered", and the school goal is to "Build a New Tomorrow, One Student at a Time". The primary grades have had a whole language program in place for many years. Two years ago a whole language curriculum called Pegasus was adopted by the entire school district for grades kindergarten through six. This curriculum is literature based with reliance on trade books and an anthology for reading materials. Units are developed around the books and include some math, social studies and science content. Reading skills are taught

within the context of the stories. The average class size for grade one, as reported in May 1995, was 25.4.

According to the 1995 School Report Card, 95% of the students at this school either met or exceeded the state expectations in the area of math. In contrast, only 77% of the students met or exceeded state expectations for reading, as indicated on the IGAP and Stanford Achievement tests. The lower achievement in the area of reading is a concern to the parents as well as the principal and teachers at this school.

Surrounding Community

The school district consists of one early-childhood center, four elementary schools , two middle schools and one high school. The district is governed by a seven member elected school board. The operating expenditure per pupil was $4,744 as reported for the 1993-94 school year. The average teacher salary for the 1994-95 school year was $38,668, which included all compensations. The average administrator's salary was $70,851. The average teacher in the district has 13.8 years of experience and 48.8% of the teachers have a masters degree or above. The pupil-teacher ratio at the elementary level was 23.1 to 1.

The city in which this school is located is the county seat of the fastest growing county in Illinois. Farm fields are fast becoming sprawling sub-divisions. The population of the county exceeds 200,000. The city is growing at a slower, more controlled rate and the population is approximately 16,000. The median family income is $40,899 and 66% of the households own their own homes. This city is located 65 miles northwest of the City of Chicago and is accessible to Chicago via Inter-state 90 and the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad.

The community is supportive of its schools through several community organizations. There is an Education Foundation which is a group of citizens that fund innovative enrichment activities through mini-grants. WACEP is an organization that

facilitates partnerships between district schools and local businesses to enhance learning. Partners in Reading is a once a year event where adults from the community go into the schools to share their joy of reading with students. The Mentor Program involves adults and high school volunteers in mentoring at-risk students.

The school district is currently dealing with the problem of overcrowding. Several school referendums have failed in recent years. Voters have failed to approve a referendum to build a new high school or remodel the existing high school which has not been improved since l960. Last year the voters did approve a referendum to build a new elementary school and remodel existing schools, but failed to approve funds to hire new teachers and staff.

National Context

"Learning to read" is considered by our culture to be the single most important educational objective for school children (Silvern, 1985), but in spite of the high value given to reading and reading instruction, " a significant number of children, even those whose intelligence is in the normal or above-average range, fail at or have great difficulty learning to read" (Snow as cited in Silvern, 1985 p. 44). The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reported in the spring of 1995, that in a study of three grades, in thirty nine states, "fewer than one-third of the students were proficient in reading; that is able to handle challenging texts competently, and only a very few (2% to 5%...) were reading at advanced levels" (McPike, 1995 p. 3). Earlier data from the NAEP also reflect a decline in reading achievement scores (Adams, 1990). Chall (cited in Adams, 1990) has examined the data across the years and feels the decline in reading scores should be considered real and dealt with accordingly. Particularly alarming is the increasing proportion of very low scores.

In 1994, the state of California, a forerunner in the adoption of the whole-language method of teaching reading, tied for last place in average reading

ability out of the 39 states ranked by the Nations Report Card (Willis, 1995). Columnist Joan Beck of the Chicago Tribune (May,1996) discusses California's experiment with whole-language and that states recent law requiring, that as a result of low reading scores, phonics will now be taught in all elementary schools. Hancock and Wingert (1996) reported in Newsweek magazine that the Riverside School District in California introduced the state's version of whole-language in 1989. That year Riverside's first grade reading scores dropped by 7% and have been falling ever since.

Although whole-language seems to be at the center of concern in the recent literature related to low national reading scores, there are other considerations. McPike (1995) tells us that there are high numbers of children from low income and disadvantaged households that come to school with very little exposure to print. They have not had the thousands of hours of conversation, word play and informal teaching that occurs in most middle-class households. Many have had little or no exposure to books and are thus not ready to learn to read. The development of phonemic awareness, which is a result of many of these early literacy experiences, is believed to be the strongest single predictor of success in learning to read (Adams & Bruck, 1995).

Institutions of higher learning are failing to adequately prepare primary teachers entering the field to teach and assess basic skills. This is due in part to an anti-research attitude within the whole-language movement (Adams & Bruck, 1995). As a reaction to this situation, the state of California is now spending millions so teachers can take courses in phonics instruction to prepare them for teaching the new required phonics curriculum (Beck, 1996).

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

Problem Evidence

At the beginning of the school year a literacy screening was administered to all first graders at the site school to identify those students who have low reading readiness skills (Appendix A). The benchmark for low readiness was knowing less than 50% of upper case letters, lower case letters, letter sounds and color words. The results of the screening reveal that a small percentage of the entering first grade population knew 50% or less of the upper and lower case letter names. A significant percentage of the children however, knew 50% or less of the letter sounds and color words. The data is presented in Figure 1.

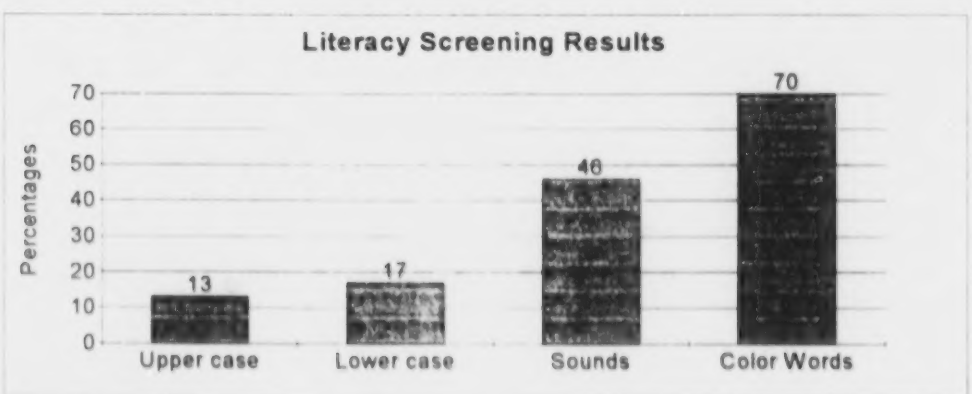

Figure 1: First Grade Results-September 1996: Percentage of Students Below Benchmark

The Literacy screening results of the targeted classroom were analyzed as an aid in the identification of targeted students. The percentages listed in Figure 2 are for the students in the targeted classroom who did not meet the benchmark score.

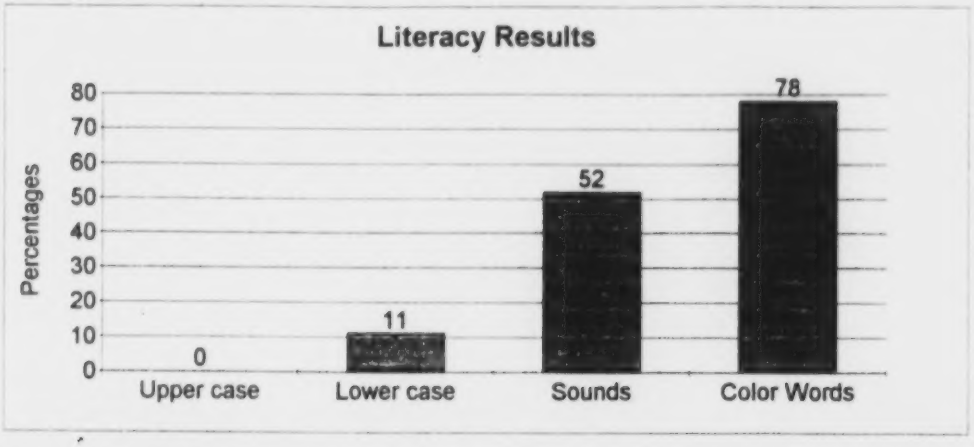

Figure 2: Targeted Classroom Screening Results-September 1996: Percentage of Students Below Benchmark

There were 27 students in the targeted classroom. As the figure indicates more students in the targeted classroom were below the benchmark for letter/sound association and color word recognition than the total first grade population. The classroom literacy results, as seen in Appendix B, gives a more complete breakdown of these scores. The Developmental Spelling Test (DST) (Appendix C) was also used as a screening tool. From this it was found that 33% of the students in the targeted classroom scored below the benchmark cut-off of 14, as shown in Figure 3.

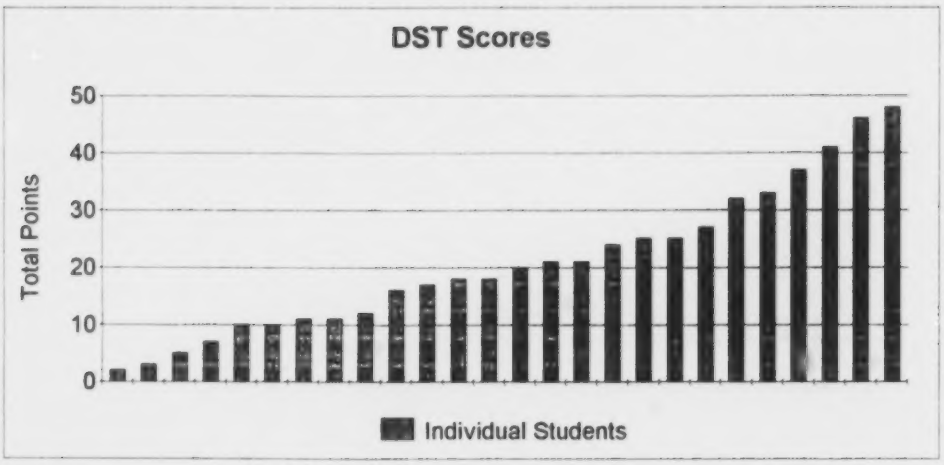

Figure 3: Developmental Spelling Test Classroom Results-September 1996

All of the tests reveal that many entering students at the school, specifically in the targeted classroom, do not have their readiness skills in place. Further analysis of the scores resulted in the identification of 11 students to be targeted in this classroom for the project intervention. The combination of their poor achievement on the Literacy Screening and the DST was the basis for being selected.

In selecting the students to be targeted for this project, emphasis was placed on letter sound awareness and how it was transferred to the DST. The Literacy Screening percentages of the targeted group are presented in Figure 4.

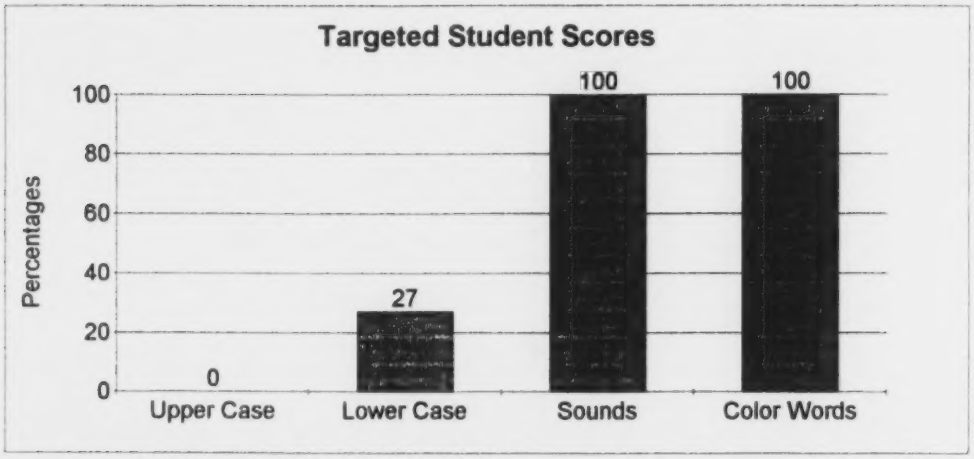

Figure 4: Targeted Students Literacy Screening Results-September 1996: Percentages of Students Below Benchmark

Figure 4 shows that all of the targeted population scored below the benchmark on both letter sounds and color word identification. Twenty-seven percent scored below the benchmark on lower case letter identification, which is a higher percentage than the total first grade and the targeted classroom population.

The criteria for the benchmark score of 14 on the DST was the use of beginning and ending sounds in the written words on that test. Although some of the students did score above the benchmark, they did not show sufficient knowledge of many beginning sounds on the tested works. They were therefore selected to be part of the targeted group. Figure 5 illustrates the scores of the targeted students on the DST.

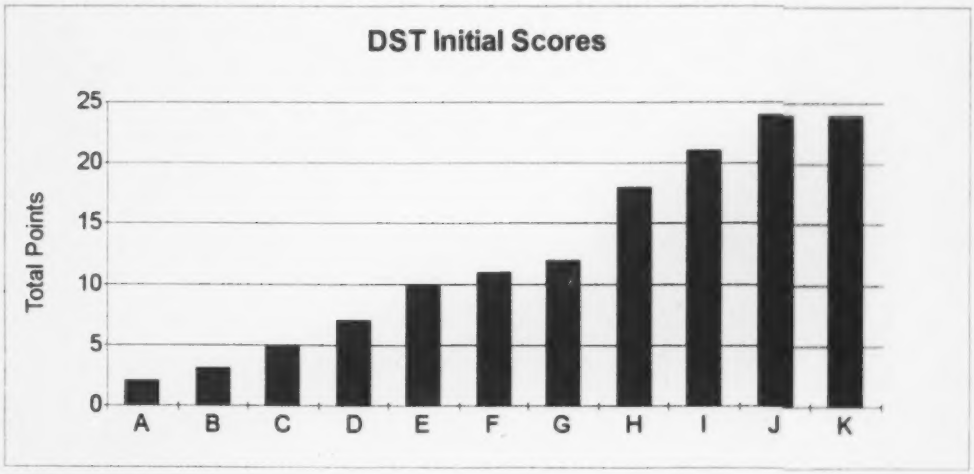

Figure 5: Results of Targeted Students-September 1996

This figure shows that 7 of the 11 targeted students, which is 64%, were below the benchmark of 14 on the DST. The mean score for this group was 12, which is also below the benchmark.

Probable Cause

Site based probable causes for the low reading achievement scores are the curriculum, classroom overcrowding and changing demographics of the community. The whole language curriculum called *Pegasus* assumes that children have alphabet knowledge upon entering first grade. It reviews the letters in the context of the literature explored throughout the year. The letters are touched on briefly, as it is assumed that the children already have their letter/sound relationship in place.

The site school is located in one of the fastest growing counties in the United States. The school population has increased from 619 in 1994, to 702 in 1996. The number of students in the targeted classroom is 27. The school districts contract identifies the optimum class size at 22. At five and one-half hours of teaching time per day, this results in an average daily contact per child of approximately ten minutes.

The result of overcrowding is less individual attention for each child. As the population has increased, so has the percentage of students from low socioeconomic homes and in the 1996-97 school year the percentage increased to 23. While this was a significant increase, it was difficult to determine its impact on reading achievement.

The Director of Curriculum for the school district in which the targeted classroom is located gave insight into the local causes of low reading achievement of first grade students. These include teacher preparation and parental involvement. According to this administrator, institutions of higher learning are not preparing teachers well enough to function under the umbrella of whole language. Moats (as cited in McPike, 1995) found that teachers are ill prepared to teach phonics and other language skills and that they cannot be expected to teach what they have not been taught. Not only are recent college graduates ill prepared to teach skills, but the targeted school district failed to sufficiently in-service teachers on how to incorporate these skill into literacy activities when the whole language philosophy was adopted years ago.

The Director of Curriculum also noted that parental involvement is the key to reading readiness. Each year we are seeing more and more children coming to school with little exposure to print and many of their basic needs unmet. Silvern (1985) stated that reading to the child is the best known, most researched and most frequently recommended parental practice that is significantly related to positive attitudes toward reading and reading achievement.

Probable cause of low reading achievement can also be attributed to the whole language philosophy itself. Willis (1995) told how whole language has won nearly universal praise for its use of children's literature and its emphasis on writing. However, it has drawn fire for its approach to teaching skills such as spelling, punctuation, grammar and especially phonics.

In summary, possible causes for low reading readiness are:

Site Based:

1. Changing Demographics
    - -Lower socioeconomic status
    - -Increase in English as a Second Language population
2. Classroom Overcrowding
3. Home Influences
    - -Both parents working
    - -Single family home
    - -Lack of literacy simulation
4. Overemphasis of Whole Language Curriculum
5. District Kindergarten Promotion Policy
    - -Developmental first grade guidelines

Literature Based Causes:

1. Maturation
    - -Phonemic awareness
2. Developmental Readiness
3. Curricular Issues
    - -Whole Language
    - -Phonics
4. Home Influences
    - -Lack of print rich environment
5. Low Socioeconomics
    - -Background of students

CHAPTER 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Literature Review

In order to look at solutions for the problem of low reading achievement of today's first graders, it is necessary to have somewhat of a historical perspective of the problem and its solutions. Marilyn Jager Adams, in her book *Beginning to Read,* gives that perspective. Adams (1990) looked at the scientific research on reading and discussed three of the outstanding studies. The first was the research of Jeanne Chall which began in 1959 and concluded in 1967 with the publication of her book *Learning to Read: The Great Debate (*Adams, 1990). Chall interviewed the creators of curriculum, analyzed 22 reading programs and visited more than 300 kindergarten through third-grade classrooms from all socioeconomic levels in the United States, England and Scotland. She looked at both meaning based ("look-say") programs and phonics programs. She found that it wasn't the programs, the class size, the content of the stories, or the phonics rules that made a difference. "Student engagement depended on the atmosphere - the momentum, support and expectations - created by the classroom teacher" (as cited in Adams, 1990 p.35). It was also noted that regardless of programs used, teachers who recently switched to a new program , incorporated skills and methods from previous programs creating an integrated approach.

Chall also compared the existing research on the "look-say " (whole word) approach to the phonics approach of teaching beginning reading. The overwhelming evidence indicated the "look-say" method resulted in an early advantage in reading rate and comprehension. The phonics method resulted in an early advantage in word recognition, particularly of untaught words. This advantage was maintained in later grades. A strong positive correlation was reported between letter knowledge (phonics) and reading achievement. It was a bigger predictor of reading success than IQ. For students beyond the third grade, however, lower levels of phonic knowledge continued to be a good predictor of low reading achievement, but IQ became the predictor of superior reading achievement (cited by Adams, 1990).

The second large scale study looked at by Adams (1990) was undertaken between 1964 and 1967 for the US Office of Education. This project was directed by Guy L. Bond and Robert Dykstra and published in 1967 as The First Grade Cooperative Studies. This study answered three questions:

1. "Which approaches were most effective?"

According to Bond and Dykstra's analysis of the data, "approaches that include systematic phonic instruction, consistently exceeded the straight basal programs in word recognition achievement scores. The approaches that included both systematic phonics and considerable emphasis on connected reading and meaning surpassed the basal - alone approaches on virtually all outcome measures" (Adams, p. 42). The data also indicated that writing was a positive component of beginning reading instruction.

2. "Did the relative effectiveness of the approaches vary with the readiness of the students?"

Bond and Dykstra found that the programs that were highly effective, were effective with all groups of children, regardless of any gauge of readiness.

3. "To what extent is first grade reading achievement determined by community, school, classroom teacher and pupil characteristics?"
No significant relationship could be found between reading achievement and any of these factors, but analysis of the pretests administered in this project revealed that the best predictor of first grade reading achievement was the student's ability to recognize and name upper and lower case letters upon entering first grade. The next best predictors were auditory discrimination ability and intelligence.

Bond and Dykstra were careful to point out that there were children who were highly successful in learning to read and children who had difficulty learning to read in every instructional method.

The third large scale study reported by Adams, known as the Follow Through Studies, was conducted in the early 1970's and was also sponsored by the federal government. This study was in response to the findings that gains made by students in Head Start did not have lasting effects. The study looked at what educational model was most effective with disadvantaged primary age students. Twenty-two instructional models, that fell into three areas of emphasis, were examined: basic academic skills, concept development and affective development through child-centered activities. Although the results varied from school to school, of the three instructional models assessed, the ones emphasizing academic skills yielded the best achievement results. The University of Oregon's Direct Instruction Model yielded the best reading achievement scores.

The reading program used by the University of Oregon's Follow Through Studies was Distar. It is highly structured and systematically teaches the phonic code. The advantage of using this program was the greatest in the first and second grades and was gone by the fourth grade, as measured by the Metropolitan Achievement Test. The children of the Oregon's Follow Through Study continued to out-perform their

peers in reading even in the fifth and sixth grades. In a study of more than 1,000 Oregon Follow Through students, they were achieving above their peers in reading and other areas in their senior year of high school.

Since the 1980's, whole language has strongly influenced the way children in the United States and Canada learn to read (Willis, 1995). The term whole language is difficult to define because proponents of this movement are not in agreement on its definition (Joslin, 1994 p. 3). Goodman (as cited in Joslin, 1994 p. 3) described it as "an educational program conducted by whole language teachers" and Rich (as cited in Joslin, 1994) stated it's "an attitude of mind which provides a shape for the classroom" (p. 3). Newman (as cited in Joslin, 1994 p. 3) stated that the theorists of whole language instruction see it as an emerging philosophy about literacy where the "focus of reading is on holistic language experiences as opposed to isolated skills such as phonics".

Although whole language does not have a concise definition in the literature, Bette Bergeron (as cited in Adams & Bruck,1995 p. 10) found, after extensive review of the literature, that there are many commonalties. They are , in her words:

> The construction of meaning, wherein an emphasis is placed on comprehending what is read,...the use of literature in a variety of forms, the writing process through which learners write, revise and edit their written works, cooperative student work; and an emphasis on affective aspects of student's learning experience, such as motivation, enthusiasm, and interest.

Bergeron (as cited in Adams & Bruck, 1995) also found that whole language enthusiasts are primarily opposed to controlled texts and direct instruction of phonics skills. Goodman (as cited in Adams & Bruck, 1995) explained that the individual sounds and words are not focused on because they are thought to interfere with meaning. He draws an analogy between the acquisition of reading ability and the

acquisition of language ability, claiming that a child will learn to read as a result of exposure to meaningful reading experiences, just as that child learned to talk as a result of continuous exposure to language. Frank Smith (as cited in Adams & Bruck, 1995), a pioneer of the whole language movement, stated that decoding skills are used by beginning readers to a limited extent and very little by fluent readers. Instead, good readers are thought to "guess" unknown words from the context. Smith doesn't feel they visually process every word but pick up only enough visual detail to corroborate their meaning from the text. Jeanne Chall (as cited in Adams & Bruck, 1995) argued that it is this stance on phonics and direct instruction that has set whole language apart from all other methods of teaching reading.

The research on the success of the whole language approach to teaching reading is not quantitative, empirical data; it is qualitative research which takes place in individual whole language classrooms (Willis, 1995). According to Manning (as cited in Willis, 1995) , whole language advocates prefer qualitative research because it reveals how children develop as readers and writers and that is precisely what they want to know. Terry Salinger, Director of Research for the International Reading Association, said, "We're only beginning to get a sense of how to do research on whole language" (as cited in Willis, 1995 p. 6).

Although it is unfortunate that there is not data to measure the effectiveness of the whole language approach to teaching reading, the advocates of whole language are adamant about its benefits. Regie Routman, author of *Transitions; From Literature to Literacy*, said whole language teachers help children discover phonics principles rather than just telling them about letter-sound relationships (as cited in Willis, 1995). Heidi Mills, co-author of *Looking Closely: Exploring the Role of phonics in One Whole Language Classroom,* said, that rather than teaching skills in isolation, whole language teachers demonstrate how letters and sounds work in the context of reading and writing

activities (as cited in Willis, 1995). Tim O'Keefe, co-author of *Looking Closely*, stated that teaching phonics in context is effective, "I've seen it with my own eyes" (as cited in Willis, 1995 p. 5).

The principles of whole language instruction are consistent with developmental appropriateness and the constructivist philosophy of creating an environment in which children are encouraged to think and explore (Brooks & Brooks, 1993). The use of good literature, teaching skills in context, making learning meaningful and discovering principles of literacy are all sound educational practices, but the critics of whole language say they are not enough to enable many children to become successful readers.

Across the centuries, methods to help the beginning reader learn the sequence of letters and their corresponding phonemes in order to decode words have been the core of most reading programs. The term "phonics" refers to such a method (Adams & Bruck, 1995). Adams & Bruck (1995) stated that a review of the literature repeatedly supports the idea that understanding the correspondence between letters and sounds predicts the speed and accuracy of reading single words and this in turn predicts the ability to comprehend. Joslin (1994) agrees that the literature supports early decoding skills as a predictor of later reading comprehension.

> In a longitudinal study of children learning to read in Sweden, Lundberg (1984) found that awareness of phonemes in the first grade correlated .70 with reading achievement in sixth grade. Out of the 46 Swedish children in this study with poor phonemic awareness and low reading achievement in the first grade, 40 continued to be poor readers in the sixth grade (Joslin, 1994 p. 5).

Phonics instruction has also been shown to lead to higher achievement in word recognition, spelling and vocabulary; especially for economically disadvantaged students (Adams & Bruck, 1995).

Not only has empirical data supported direct instruction of phonics, current research on the brain is supportive of direct instruction. Dr. Frank Vellutino, Director of The Child Research Center at SUNY - Albany, stated that "the brain has no inherent knowledge of the alphabet,...it has to be taught" (as cited in Hancock & Wingert, 1996 p. 75). Groff (1994) agreed that the research does not support the theory of whole language advocates, that children learn to read in the same way they learn to talk. In Charles Perfetti's words:

> Learning to read is not like acquiring one's native language, no matter how much someone wishes it were so. Natural language is acquired quickly with a large biological contribution. Its forms are reinvented by every child exposed to a speech community in the first years of life. It is universal among human communities. By contrast, literacy is a cultural invention. It is far from universal.... It depends on language rather than parallels it (as cited in Adams & Bruck, 1995 p. 14).

In contrast to the theory of Goodman, that readers gain meaning from the context rather than from individual sounds and words, (Adams and Bruck, 1995) related that the current research indicates good readers visually process every letter of every word, translating print to meaning as they go, with a high level of automaticity. Joslin (1994) stated that identifying all the words a first grader is exposed to by sight and context would be a difficult task. Research revealed that adult readers can accurately use context to predict only one out of four words (Gough et al 1981, as cited in Joslin, 1994).

Becoming a Nation of Readers, published by the United States Department of Education, stated that the question of whether or not to teach phonics to young children is not the issue, but rather how to teach it most efficiently (cited in Groff, 1989). Whole language advocates would state it should be taught implicitly in the meaningful context

of literature and phonics advocates would say it should be taught explicitly and systematically. Carbo (1995) described whole language as the global approach and phonics as the analytic approach. She stated people tend to polarize around these two extremes of the pendulum and in the process the focus is taken off of the child. Carbo's theory of "learning styles" claims that some children learn best with a global approach and some learn best with an analytic approach and recommends a combination of approaches to match the method of instruction to the learning style of the student. She recommends using whole language as a framework for teaching reading and adapting the strategies within that framework. "Reading instruction should focus on literature, choices, fun, and writing, with a small amount of direct instruction in phonics for those youngsters who learn well with that approach" (Carbo, 1995 p. 61).

Groff (1989) stated that the research refutes Carbo's "learning styles" theory and that children with low phonological ability do not suffer from a particular learning style, but simply have not been taught this skill. He advocated that phonics instruction be direct, systematic, intense and as early as possible. Groff favors small group instruction to accommodate children's different skill levels.

It would seem that a program that integrates phonics skills instruction within the frame of a literature based curriculum would best meet the needs of all students (Joslin, 1994). McPike (1995 p. 6) argues that teachers can develop a well balanced program that takes the best from whole language and the best from direct phonics instruction and in the process give "all children their best hope for learning and loving to read". The literature supports this integrated approach, which is the approach chosen for this research project. An analysis of the Oregon Follow Through Study, cited earlier, revealed that one of the schools was unusually successful in long term reading and academic achievement. It was found that from the beginning, the students at this school were engaged in reading and interpreting stories. "It would appear, then, that

an early opportunity to do meaningful connected reading in addition to learning how to decode is needed to integrate both abilities" (Chall cited by Adams, 1990 p. 47).

Joslin (1994) conducted a study comparing the effects of a pure whole language curriculum with a modified whole language curriculum on 20 kindergartners. He found that the modified group, which received 15-20 minutes of direct, systematic phonics instruction in addition to the holistic literature activities; acquired greater automaticity in decoding words. The whole language group lacked strategies to decode accurately, even when words were in context and this in turn resulted in lower reading comprehension.

Hancock and Wingert (1996) reported that when teachers at Rosendale Elementary in Niskayuna, New York found that whole language was not enough, they developed a program to integrate phonics into their whole language curriculum. After only two years, the number of children requiring remedial reading was greatly reduced.

In addition to creating an integrated approach to teaching reading, it is necessary to establish parental involvement in reading instruction to insure that there is encouragement, carryover and practice of skills at home. In a review of the literature, Silvern (1985) stated that there is extensive research to document a high positive correlation between programs of parent involvement and student achievement. The research indicated that the home environment of the child has a greater impact on learning than school related factors. Silvern found that the research also suggested guidelines for setting up a successful parent-reading program. These included: be specific about requests, explain the benefits of the program, give a time frame, and encourage thinking by giving parents examples of comprehension questions to ask their children. Teachers can also suggest reading material and encourage greater use of community libraries.

From looking at the historical and current research on reading, it becomes apparent that early reading instruction needs to address the complex nature of the child. Following is a summary of what can be said about early reading instruction based on the literature:

* It requires a teacher who can engage students in learning by properly pacing instruction (Chall as cited in Adams, 1990).

* It should be meaning based to develop comprehension skills (Chall as cited in Adams, 1990).

* It should include direct instruction of phonics skills for an early and lasting advantage in word recognition and decoding skills (Bond & Dykstra as cited in Adams, 1990; Groff, 1989).

* Knowledge of the upper and lower case letters and their corresponding phonemes should be taught as early as possible to all socioeconomic groups. (Groff, 1989).

* Writing should be a component of the reading program (Bond & Dykstra as cited in Adams, 1990; Carbo, 1995).

* The framework for reading instruction should be a whole language approach with emphasis on meaning, holistic teaching, skills related to the context, and the writing process (Newman as cited in Adams & Bruck, 1995; Newman as cited in Joslin, 1994).

* Direct instruction of phonics skills should be integrated into this whole language framework to teach phonemic awareness, sound segmentation and decoding (Bergeron as cited by Adams & Bruck, 1996; Smith as cited by Willis, 1995).

Based on the historical and current research, a project objective and the processes necessary to achieve that objective were developed and implemented.

Project Objective and Processes

As a result of integrating and transferring phonics skills instruction in the context of a whole language curriculum during the period of September 1996 to January 1997, the targeted first grade students will improve their reading ability as measured by teacher assessment, teacher observation and standardized tests.

In order to accomplish the project objective, the following processes are necessary:

1. A program will be established to review and reinforce alphabet skills and phonemic awareness
2. A program to integrate phonic skills within the existing whole language curriculum will be developed
3. A home/school connection for reinforcing reading skills at home will be established
4. A book buddy read-aloud program will be implemented

Project Action Plan

The following action plan will be implemented to accomplish the project objective and solution processes.

I. The targeted students will be identified during the first two weeks of first grade. Early assessment of readiness skills will allow the researchers to identify those students who need additional support in order to be ready to read.

   A. Students of the targeted class will be assessed using the Literacy Screening Packet in Appendix A and the Developmental Spelling Test in Appendix C. The Literacy Screening Roster includes the results of all tests (Appendix B)

as well as the Slosson Test of Reading Readiness that was administered at the end of Kindergarten in the Spring of 1996 (Appendix D).

B. Data from assessments will be analyzed to identify the students with low reading readiness skills (Appendix E).

II. A program will be developed to review and reinforce alphabet skills and phonemic awareness because the research confirms that a foundational skill of reading readiness is knowledge of the alphabet. This includes recognition of upper and lower case letters and the sounds (phonemes) the letters represent. In addition to letter-sound recognition, children need to have phonemic awareness which includes the ability to hear sounds, the differences in sounds, sounds in sequence and rhyming words.

A. Based on the assessment data, a list of the most frequently missed letters that are not covered in the Pegasus curriculum will be created for alphabet review and reinforcement.

B. A Daily lesson will be developed for each of the letters (Appendix F). These lessons will include:

1. Introducing the phoneme and how it is produced. The letter name and the written symbol according to the Lindamood-Bell Auditory Discrimination in Depth method (Appendix G).
2. An auditory discrimination activity to identify the sound in words (Appendix H).
3. A short read-aloud story that contains repetition of the targeted phonemes.

4. The Daily Oral Phonics Program (Appendix I).
5. Individual "office time" for paper and pencil skill reinforcement (Appendix J).
6. Periodic daily skill drills (Appendix K).

The identified letters in section A above will be addressed during the first month of school, before the Pegasus whole language program is introduced. The mini-lessons from section B above will be incorporated into the Pegasus program for the remainder of the intervention, four days per week, twenty minutes per day.

III. A home/school connection for reinforcing reading skills will be established. Early readers can benefit from being read to at home for several reasons, including enhancement of reading skills learned, enjoyment of reading and positive parental role-modeling. A home reading log can encourage parental accountability and allow the teacher to assess if the home connection is working.

A. On Monday through Thursday students will select a book from the Rigby 2000 Literacy Series to be read at home. A library pocket chart system (Appendix L) will be provided for the students to record books taken home. A zip lock bag will be provided to transport the books. A list of ways to accomplish home reading will be included in each bag (Appendix M).

B. A home reading log (Appendix N) will be sent home in the plastic bag. The parent will record the books read and the date. An additional space will be provided for comments. It should be returned to school the next day.

IV. A school read-aloud program will be implemented in order to ensure that the children have adequate exposure to print and that they experience the joy of reading. This will be a Book Buddies Program in which there will be cross-grade

reading between fourth and first grade students. Fourth grade students will come to the first grade classroom once a week for twenty minutes for the entire intervention period.

A. Teachers will pair first graders with fourth graders as reading buddies. They will remain buddies with the same person for the entire school year.

B. The first grade child will select a book from the first grade selection of books to be read by the fourth grader.

C. The teacher will provide the fourth graders with a card containing comprehension questions (Appendix O).

D. Fourth graders will record information on the Buddy Log (Appendix P).

Methods of Assessment

In order to assess the effects of the intervention, the Developmental Spelling Test will be administered at the end of the intervention to determine the student's ability to correctly use beginning, middle and ending sounds in words. A running record (Appendix P) will be administered at the end of the intervention to track reading performance. The standardized assessment will be the Gates MacGinitie Test of Reading Readiness administered in January 1997.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of the Intervention

The objective of this project was to improve the reading achievement of first grade students. The integration of phonics skills into a whole language curriculum was chosen to achieve this objective.

A program was developed to review alphabet skills and teach phonemic awareness to first grade students during the first semester of the school year. The students were assessed during the first two weeks of school to determine what letters and sounds they did not know. Daily lessons, which are found in Appendix F, were developed to teach these letters. Additional letters and sounds were taught as they occurred in the Pegasus curriculum, using these same mini-lessons. These lessons were taught four days a week and lasted approximately 20 minutes. The Daily Oral Phonics Program, found in Appendix I, and "office time" activities found in Appendix J occurred daily. Periodic skill drills, found in Appendix K, were conducted periodically, as time allowed, to reinforce skills.

A home/school connection for reinforcing reading skills at home was established. This was a book check-out program which occurred four days a week using the Rigby Literacy 2000 Series books. A list of comprehension questions for

parents to ask their children was an integral part of the program and is found in Appendix M.

A school read-aloud program called Book Buddies was implemented once a week for twenty minutes. In this program, fourth grade students were paired with first grade students as reading buddies in the targeted classroom. For the first three months, the fourth grade students read to the first grade students. During the last month of the intervention, the first grade students read books to their fourth grade buddies.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

The Developmental Spelling Test, which assesses the ability to hear and encode beginning, middle and ending sounds in words, was administered in January 1997. This test was given originally in September 1996 as a screening tool to identify the targeted students for the project intervention. In September the DST benchmark score was 14 and 7 of the 11 targeted students, which is 64%, were below the benchmark. In January the semi-phonetic benchmark score was 31 and 100% of the targeted students scored above the benchmark. Student G moved before the final assessment was administered. These results are illustrated in Figure 6.

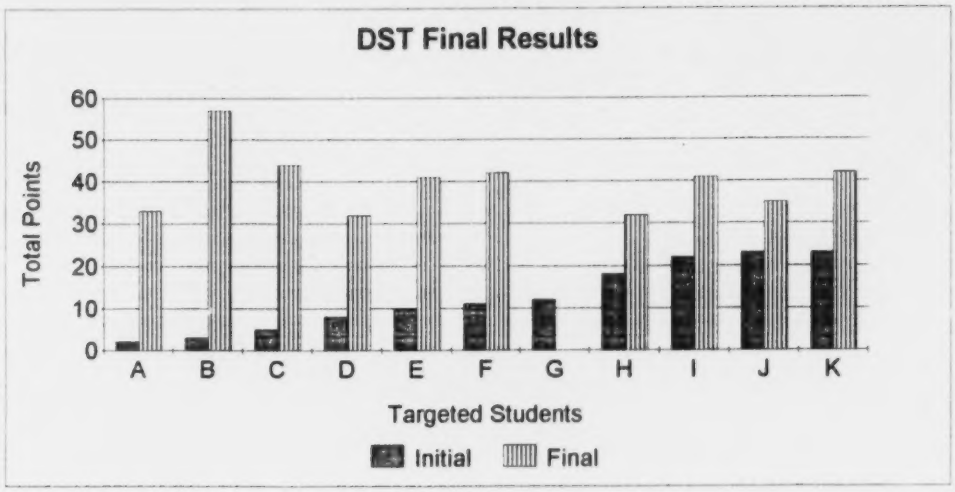

Figure 6: Comparison of Initial and Final DST Scores

In September 1996 the assessments on the Literacy Screening Packet, found in Appendix A, were administered. From these tests, the researchers looked at knowledge of upper and lower case letters, letter sounds and color words to identify the targeted students. In September 27% of the targeted students scored below the benchmark on lower case letter identification and 100% scored below the benchmark on letter sounds and color word identification. In January 1997, the Gates MacGinitie Test of Reading Readiness was administered to measure growth in readiness skills and reading ability. This test assesses knowledge of initial and final consonants and vowels as they occur in words, as well as independent reading comprehension. The

percentages of students who scored at or above the fourth stanine are shown in Figure-7.

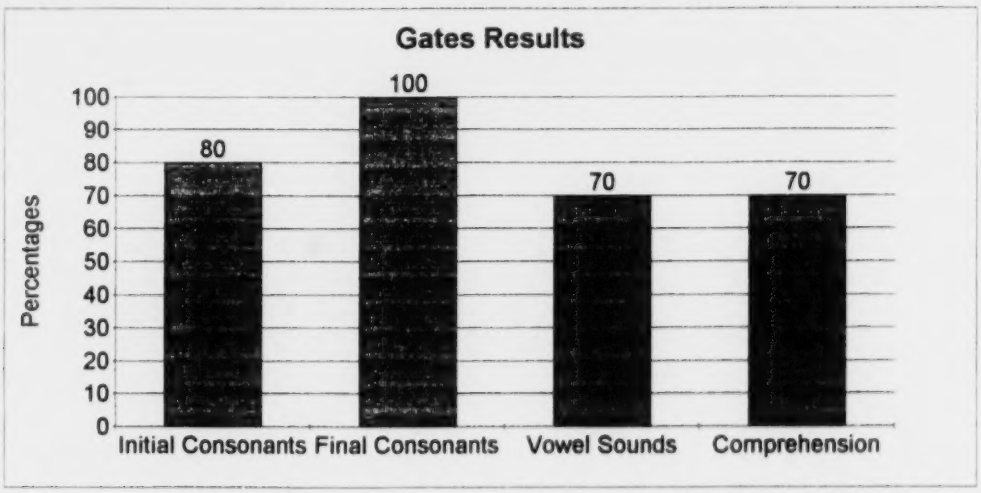

Figure 7: Gates MacGinitie Results for Targeted Students Scoring at or above the 4th Stanine.

A running record of each student's reading ability was also conducted. The targeted students each read a level three Rigby 2000 Literacy Series book to their teacher. Each mistake was counted as an error and errors were tallied to establish a percentage score for correct reading as found in Appendix Q . The reading scores fall into three levels; frustration, instructional and independent. The results of the January running record revealed that 8 of the 10 targeted students, or 80%, were at or above the instructional level for reading, This is the benchmark level for the end of the first semester of first grade. Figure 8 illustrates these results.

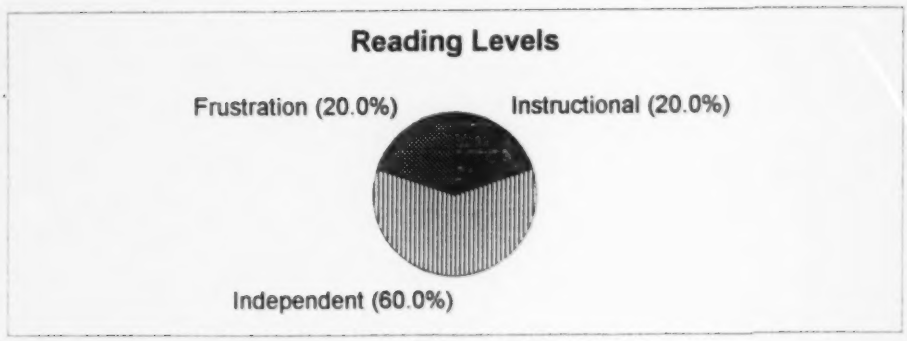

Figure 8: Percentage of Students in each Reading Level

Conclusions and Recommendations

The objective of the intervention was to improve the reading achievement of first grade students who enter school with low readiness skills. When the results of the screening assessments done in September 1996 are compared to the assessments conducted in January 1997, it is apparent that the intervention was successful. The improved DST scores indicate that all of the targeted students improved in phonemic awareness and reading readiness to grade level or above. The Gates scores in January indicate that the majority of students were in the average range for consonant and vowel identification and reading comprehension, compared to 100% who were below the acceptable range in September. The running record results are particularly significant because they indicate that 80% of the targeted students were at or above the instructional level for reading, which is right where they are supposed to be in January of first grade.

Based on the results of the intervention and the research, it can be recommended that phonics skills be integrated into whole language curriculums. Combining these two approaches to reading to create a balanced program is taking the

best from both worlds to meet the needs of children. This should help insure that all children become skilled readers in the future.

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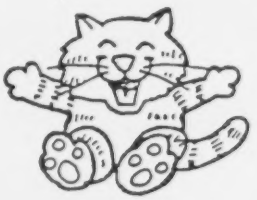
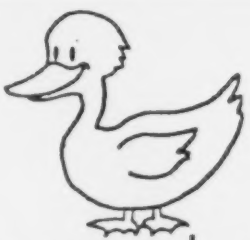
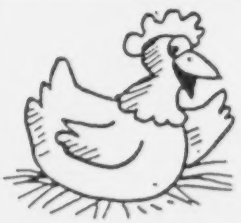
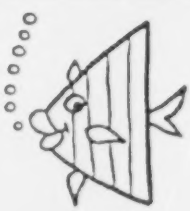
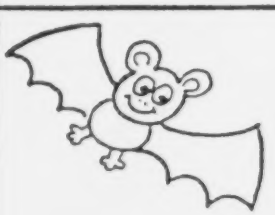
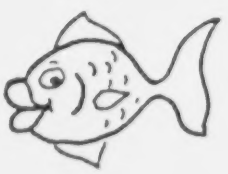
Appendices

Appendix A
Literacy Screening Packet

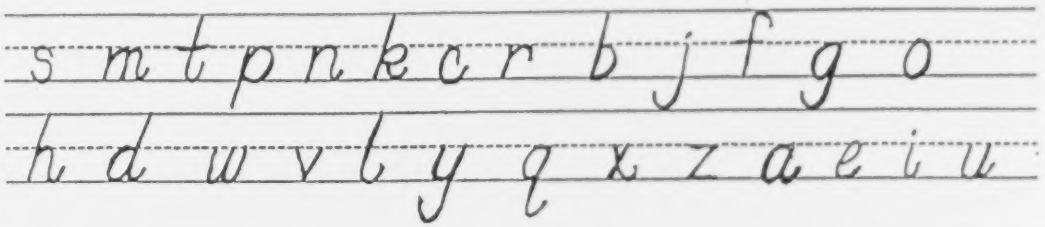
1. Color Word Recognition
2. Letter/Sound Recognition
3. The Primary Language Screening (TPLS)

Name_____

black dog	brown bunny	 yellow cat
 green duck	 red hen	orange bird
 purple fish	blue bird	 brown bat
white rat	gray owl	 pink fish

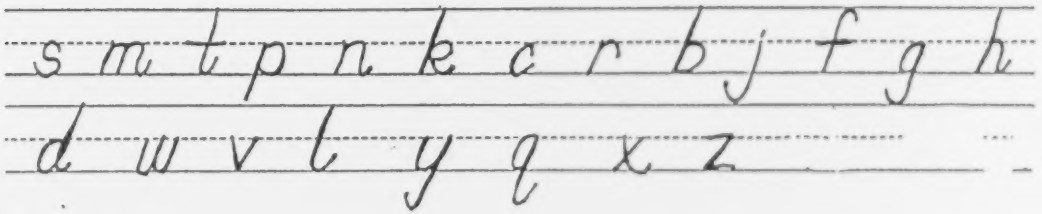
Name _____ Date _____

lower case letters



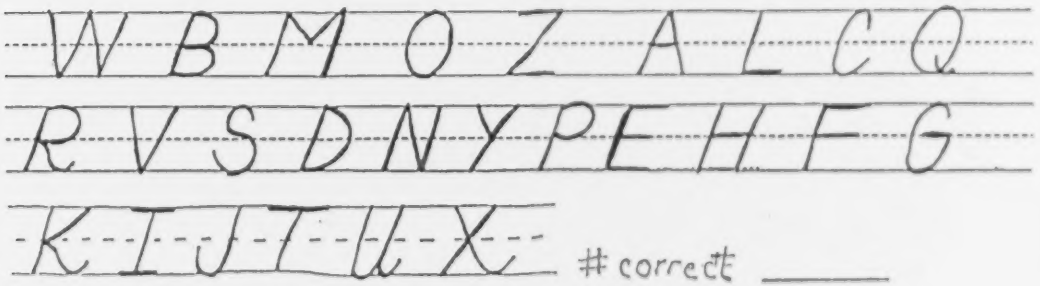
correct ____

consonant letter sounds



correct ____

capital letters



correct ____

TPLS EXPRESSIVE SPEECH AND LANGUAGE WORKSHEET

NAME: _____ SEX: (circle) M or F

GRADE: (circle) K or 1 DATE OF TEST ___/___/___ SP/L CLINICIAN _____

DISTRICT: _____ SCHOOL: _____ TEACHER'S NAME _____

Mark X if Failed:

Opposites and Analogies:
Instruct the child to orally fill in the blank for each. Accept any reasonable answer:

_____ 21. Mary is tall but Bob is not tall, he is _____ (short, little...)
_____ 22. A baby is young, but a grandfather is _____ (old, dead...)
_____ 23. In the morning it is early, but at night it is _____ (late, dark...)

Sentence Repetition:
Instruct the child to repeat each exactly. Response must be verbatim

_____ 24. My sister and brother eat snakes in the summer.
_____ 25. My mother was so tired she fell asleep in the bathtub.
_____ 26. On my next vacation, I will take an elephant to Pittsburgh.

Grammatic Closure:
Accept any reasonable answer within the grammatical class. Clinician may use gesturing, but no pictures.

_____ 27. The bikes belong to the children. Whose bikes are they?
They are the _____. (children's)
_____ 28. A boy might be tall, and a man is _____. (taller)
_____ 29. And a giant is the _____. (tallest)
_____ 30. This is a foot, these are two _____. (feet)
_____ 31. Everyday Lisa throws a ball. Yesterday she _____ it.

Pragmatics:
Response(s) may be verbal and/or nonverbal.

_____ 32. Show me your right hand.
_____ 33. When is your birthday?

INFORMAL SCREENING DATA

Pragmatics: Note the following types of behavior: _____
As child enters room, note greeting. _____
Is language appropriate to context and people? _____
Can the child ask and answer questions? Take turns? _____
Does the child have appropiate eye contact, nonverbal communication? _____
As child leaves room, note closing. _____

Spontaneous Language Sample Record at least three sentences. Note syntax, semantic content and length. Ask:
Do you have a brother, sister, etc.? Tell me about them. _____
_____
Articulation: Listen for all phonemes as child speaks. _____
Count to 10: _____

Articulation Errors noted:								
Stimulability: (check means yes)								

Physiologic Support for Speech _____
Voice Quality _____
Fluency _____
Comments _____

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RECEPTIVE DIRECTIONS

Administration

Administration of The Primary Language Screen is simple and efficient. The screen is divided into two parts: receptive and expressive.

Materials

1. test material
2. test booklets (make up booklets from reproducible forms)
3. crayons, markers or pencils.

The receptive portion of the TPLS can be administered in a small group, a classroom of children or individually. The receptive test should be given at one setting. When a large group of children is being tested (over 12) an aide is helpful. The tester may choose to write the children's names on the booklets in advance of testing. The children should be seated well apart so the temptation to copy is avoided. It is important that enough time is allotted after each question for the child to respond.

Before passing out the test booklets the examiner says to the children:

"I am going to give each of you a book and a marker (pencil, crayon).
Leave them on your desk.
We are going to look at some pictures and you will mark an X on the one I say.
This is how you make an X." (Examiner makes an X on the chalkboard).

The examiner passes out the booklets then says:

"Turn to the page with the heart on the top.
Now find the row with the square.
Put your finger under the square." (Examiner holds up a book and demonstrates using a marker).

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"Turn to the page with the heart on the top."

1. "Put your finger under the square."
   "Look at that row."
   "Put an X on IS TALKING - IS TALKING."
   (Examiner should read the enlarged print portion twice.)

2. "Put your finger under the circle."
   "Look at that row."
   "Put an X on CHILD - CHILD."

3. "Put your finger under the triangle."
   "Look at that row."
   "Put an X on MICE - MICE."

4. "Put your finger under the star."
   "Look at that row."
   "Put an X on THE LADY WILL GIVE THE BOOK TO HER - THE LADY WILL GIVE THE BOOK TO HER."

5. "Put your finger under the diamond."
   "Look at that row."
   "Put an X on IT IS HIS SUITCASE. - IT IS HIS SUITCASE."

"Turn to the page with the pencil on the top."

6. "Put your finger under the square."
   "Look at that row."
   "Put an X on THEY - THEY."

7. "Put your finger under the circle."
   "Look at that row."
   "Put an X on THE BOY BUILT A SNOWMAN - THE BOY BUILT A SNOWMAN."

8. "Put your finger under the triangle."
   "Look at that row."
   "Put an X on PLANTED - PLANTED."

9. "Put your finger under the star."
   "Look at that row."
   "Put an X on HE WILL SLIDE - HE WILL SLIDE."

10. "Put your finger under the diamond."
    "Look at that row."
    "Put an X on THE FISH ARE SWIMMING. - THE FISH ARE SWIMMING."

"Turn to the page with the apple on the top."

11. "Put your finger under the square."
"Look at that row."
"Put an X on THE MAN EATS - THE MAN EATS."

12. "Put your finger under the circle."
"Look at that row."
"Put an X on THE DEER IS RUNNING. - THE DEER IS RUNNING.

13. "Put your finger under the triangle."
"Look at that row."
"Put an X on the rabbit ABOVE THE GRASS - ABOVE THE GRASS."

14. "Put your finger under the star."
"Look at that row."
"Put an X on a PAIR of shoes - a PAIR of shoes."

15. "Put your finger under the diamond."
"Look at that row."
"Put an X on the truck NEAREST the light - NEAREST the light."

NOTE: This section is the hardest. If the children seem to be worried that they don't know the answer, reassure them that they are not expected to know all the items and to just take a guess.

"Turn to the page with the scissors on the top."

16. "Put your finger under the square."
"Look at that row."
"Put an X on the one that is EMPTY - EMPTY."

17. "Put your finger under the circle."
"Look at that row."
"Put an X on DIVIDING - DIVIDING."

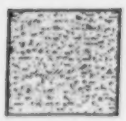
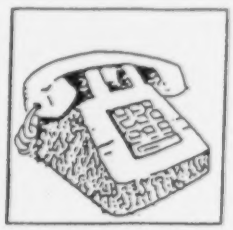
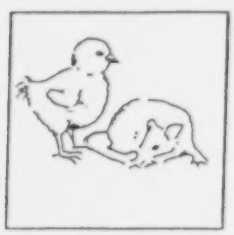
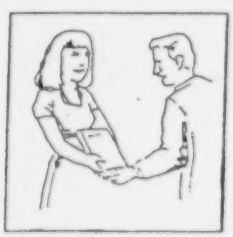
18. "Put your finger under the triangle."
"Look at that row."
"Put an X on APPLIANCE - APPLIANCE."

19. "Put your finger under the star."
"Look at that row."
"Put an X on TRANSPORTATION - TRANSPORTATION."

20. "Put your finger under the diamond."
"Look at that row."
"Put an X on PURCHASING - PURCHASING."

After the children are through, the examiner collects the test booklets.

Student _____

	A	B	C	
				1
				2
				3
				4
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Student _____

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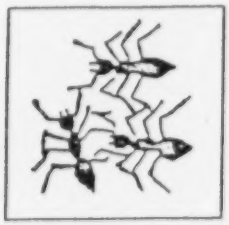
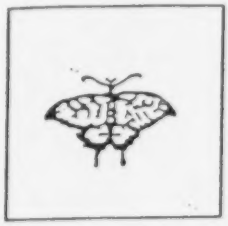
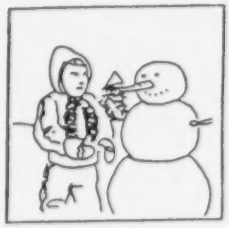
■				6
●				7
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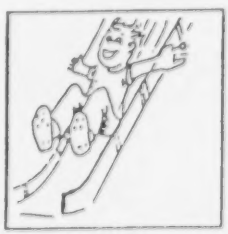
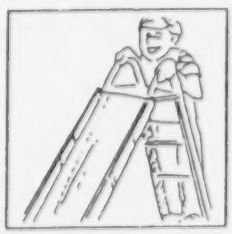
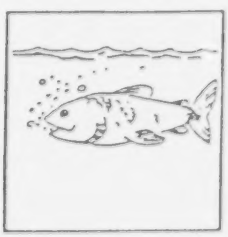
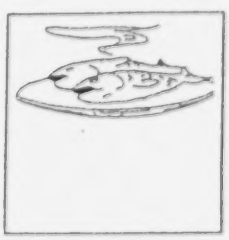
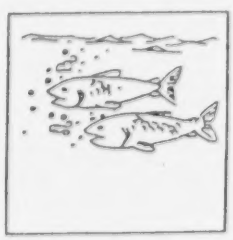
★				9
◆				10

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Student _____

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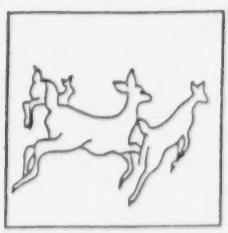
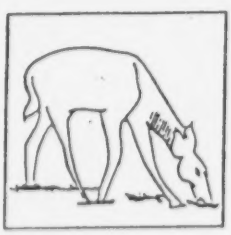
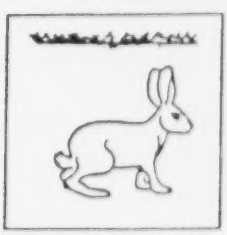
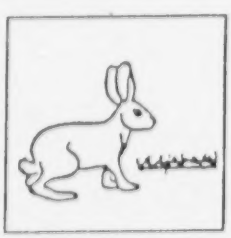
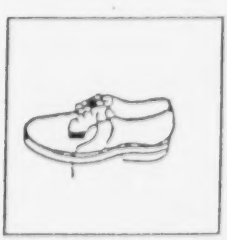
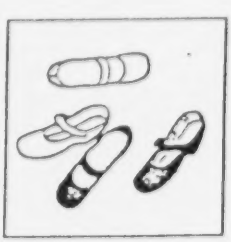
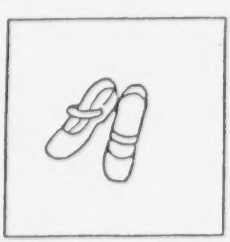
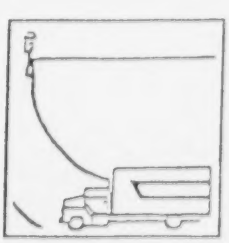
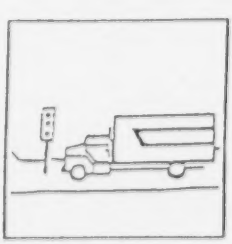
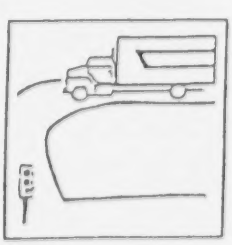
				12
				13
				14
				15

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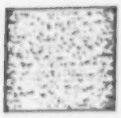
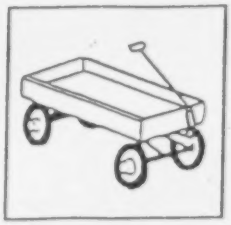
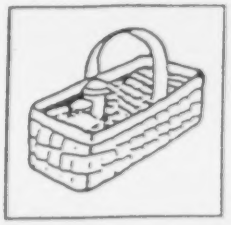
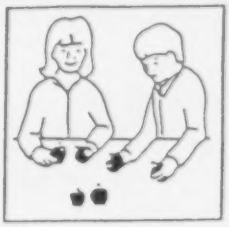
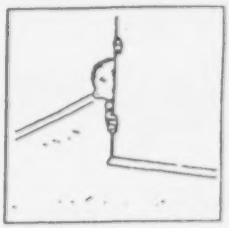
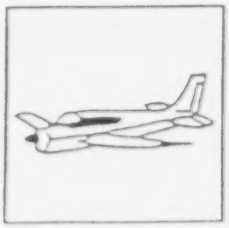
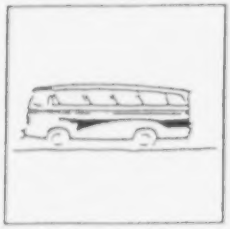
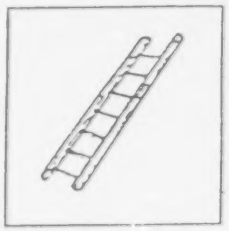
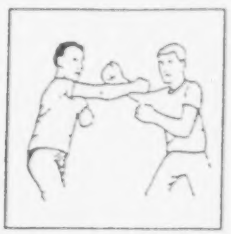
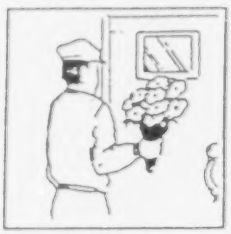
				16
				17
				18
				19
				20

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Appendix B
Literacy Screening Roster

Student	Slosson	Colors	Sounds	Up. Case	Low. Case	TPLS
1	62.5/129	1/12	2/21	15/26	9/26	14/20
2	59/123	0/12	8/21	24/26	19/26	17/20
3	57.5/121	2/12	2/21	22/26	14/26	16/20
4	67.5/137	0/12	4/21	17/26	5/26	13/20
5	53/114	1/12	0/21	18/26	13/26	14/20
6	71.5/145	0/12	8/21	26/26	14/26	18/20
7	67.5/137	0/12	8/21	25/26	21/26	12/20
8	80/161	6/12	11/21	25/26	23/26	11/20
9	70/142	1/12	1/12	15/26	20/26	18/20
10	81/163	5/12	9/21	26/26	20/26	17/20
11	69.5/141	2/12	9/21	22/26	18/26	19/20
12	62.5/129	4/12	15/21	22/26	18/26	13/20
13	65.5/134	1/12	16/21	26/26	22/26	13/20
14	67.5/137	0/12	2/21	25/26	21/26	17/20
15	69/140	9/12	18/21	26/26	25/26	16/20
16	70.5/143	0/12	10/21	14/26	21/26	
17	71.5/145	0/12	14/21	26/26	24/26	16/20
18	72.5/147	12/12	17/21	26/26	21/26	18/20
19	75/121	6/12	17/21	26/26	26/26	18/20
20	77.5/156	4/12	14/21	25/26	23/26	18/20
21	77/155	0/12	13/21	26/26	22/26	14/20
22	80/161	6/12	15/21	26/26	23/26	17/20
23	81/163	12/12	21/21	26/26	24/26	18/20
24	81/163	3/12	11/21	23/26	20/26	
25	81/163	11/12	16/21	26/26	25/26	16/20
26	82/165	12/12	19/21	26/26	23/26	17/20

Appendix C
Developmental Spelling Test

SCORING SYSTEM FOR THE DST

0 points -- A random string of letters, numbers, or letter-like shapes (MAU for lake) or a spelling in which the beginning letter is an unacceptable representation of the correct phoneme (PCT for back) or no response.

An acceptable consonant is one that is sometimes used in Standard English to represent the initial sound of the word. Sink, side and stick may begin with S or C. Also, acceptable are those spellings that are linked in some logical way to the phoneme to be represented. For example, dress and dragon may begin with G, J or D.

1 point -- Only the beginning consonant sound is represented acceptably (MOTM or M for mail; C for sink). It is not uncommon for a kindergartner to use the initial consonant sound followed by a random string of letters (SGTOTM for stick).

Reversals are accepted as correct at the beginning stages. Thus DNO for back receives one point since the initial D is interpreted as a common reversal of B.

2 points -- A) Acceptable beginning and ending consonants are used and vowels are omitted or incorrect. Dress may be spelled GS, JC, or DRS for two points.

One point is assigned if a child uses an acceptable first letter followed by a random string of letters even if the random string ends acceptably. (POOARMT for peeked = one point even though the final sound happens to be acceptable).

B) Acceptable beginning consonants plus acceptable vowel substitutions are used. For long vowels, the acceptable letter-name substitution is a single letter spelling of the correct long vowel sound (FE for feet = two points). For short vowels the acceptable letter-name substitutions are

a for e
e for i
i for o
o for u
e for a

3 points -- The child renders a phonetic map of the word. The beginning and ending consonants are spelled appropriately and long vowels are spelled by letter-name (MAL for mail; FET for feet) or short vowels use allowable substitutions (SEK for stick; GAS for dress).

A score of three is assigned even though the second letter of an initial consonant blend or the first letter in the final consonant blend is omitted (SEK for sink; TAT for test; DAS for dress; SEK for stick)

Spellings which represent all the sounds in a word but have extra letters (BATK for back) can be difficult to score. Extra consonants (except nasal m and n) should be viewed as breaking up the phonetic map of the word required for a score of three. The extra T in BATK breaks up the map and is given a score of two even though three sounds are correctly represented.

The scorer may be more tolerant of extra vowels than of extra consonants. A general guide says that for three points, one extra vowel letter may be disregarded if one of the vowels is an acceptable one. Thus, SEIK for sink and TEET for test receive three points each.

4 points -- Transitional stage spelling reflects a knowledge of conventional spelling patterns (CVC, CVCe, CVVC). Conventional spellings of consonant sounds appear as children learn that spelling is not just the simple matching of letters to sounds. (Dress now must be spelled with DR in spite of the affricated sound.)

A spelling receives four points when 1) consonant sounds are represented conventionally. (Dragon begins with DR.) Stick must begin with ST, not CT, but side may be spelled CIDE for four points as conventional spelling does allow words to begin with CI. 2) All consonant sounds are represented. (STIK = four, but SIK = three). 3) short vowels are spelled correctly (DRES for dress). 4) long vowels are marked by a subsequent vowel (LITE for light).

For two-syllable words an acceptable vowel spelling is required in the accented syllable for three points and there must be a consonant to indicate recognition of the second syllable. Thus, score two points for dragon as JRAN (missing the boundary of the accented syllable) and three points for GAGN.

To merit four points on two-syllable words short vowels must be correct, long vowels marked and a vowel letter must be used in the second syllable (DRAGIN = four points).

When considering difficult to score items, it is best to think in terms of taking credit away. Thus, JRAGIN seems to merit four points as the short vowel is correct and a vowel letter appears in the unaccented syllable. However, the initial spelling of JR rather than DR shows a phonetic orientation to the word. Therefore, the conservative score of three is assigned as a point taken away.

5 points -- Word is spelled correctly.

DEVELOPMENTAL SPELLING TEST

	Words	Sentences	
1.	TACK	A tack is a small nail.	TACK
2.	SKIN	Skin covers our hands.	SKIN
3.	MAIL	I got a letter in the mail.	MAIL
4.	DRESS	We dress for school in the morning.	DRESS
5.	LAKE	It's fun to watch the boats out on the lake.	LAKE
6.	CLEAN	Make sure your hands are clean.	CLEAN
7.	LIGHT	Turn on the light, please.	LIGHT
8.	DRAGON	The scary dragon breathes fire.	DRAGON
9.	STICK	We use glue to make things stick together.	STICK
10.	WIDE	The truck's wheels are very wide.	WIDE
11.	BLEED	A cut will make you bleed.	BLEED
12.	PRESS	Don't press too hard on your pencil.	PRESS

NAME_____

DATE_____

1._____

2._____

3._____

4._____

5._____

6._____

7._____

8._____

9._____

10._____

11._____

12._____

Stage

Preliterate	___	x 0	=___	0 - 7
Semiphonetic1	___	x 1	=___	8 - 19
Semiphonetic2	___	x 2	=___	20-31
Phonetic	___	x 3	=___	32-43
Transitional	___	x 4	=___	44-56
Correct	___	x 5	=___	57-60

TOTAL=____

NAME_____

DATE_____

1._____

2._____

3._____

4._____

5._____

6._____

7._____

8._____

9._____

10._____

11._____

12._____

Stage

Preliterate	___	x 0	=___	0 - 7
Semiphonetic1	___	x 1	=___	8 - 19
Semiphonetic2	___	x 2	=___	20-31
Phonetic	___	x 3	=___	32-43
Transitional	___	x 4	=___	44-56
Correct	___	x 5	=___	57-60

TOTAL=____

Appendix D

Slosson Test of Reading Readiness

STRR

Leslie Anne Perry
Gary J. Vitali

Score Booklet

Child's Name: _____ Date of Assessment: _____

Age (Year & Month): _____ Date of Birth: _____ Sex: _____

Examiner: _____ School: _____

SCREENING RESULTS: _____

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SUBTEST 1: **Recognition of Capital Letters**
Score ½ point for each correct response. Total Possible: 13

__ D	__ Z	__ T	__ P	__ O	__ B	__ N
__ A	__ R	__ Y	__ M	__ E	__ H	__ X
__ G	__ V	__ C	__ F	__ I	__ W	__ L
__ Q	__ J	__ U	__ S	__ K		

Score _____

SUBTEST 2: **Recognition of Lower Case Letters**
Score ½ point for each correct response. Total Possible: 13

__ v	__ a	__ k	__ z	__ l	__ h	__ b
__ y	__ j	__ r	__ g	__ m	__ q	__ n
__ d	__ s	__ u	__ f	__ c	__ w	__ x
__ e	__ i	__ o	__ t	__ p		

Score _____

SUBTEST 3: **Matching Capital and Lower Case Letters**
Score 1 point for each correct response. Total Possible: 8

__ A-a __ U-u __ C-c __ N-n __ K-k __ G-g __ I-i __ D-d

Score _____

SUBTEST 4: **Visual Discrimination – Matching Word Forms**
Score 3 points for each correct response. Total Possible: 12

____ do ____ am ____ be ____ go

Score _____

SUBTEST 5: **Auditory Discrimination Rhyming Words**
Score 1 point for each correct response. Total Possible: 9

____ cat ____ dig ____ fox ____ rug ____ boy
____ mouse ____ look ____ goat ____ rake

Note: The words listed here are the stimulus words. If the child supplies a word that rhymes with the stimulus word (even if it is a nonsense word) the item should be scored as correct.

Score _____

SUBTEST 6: **Auditory Discrimination and Memory—Recognition of Beginning Sounds**
Score 1 point for each correct response. Total Possible: 9

____ hat ____ ball ____ soap ____ house ____ fish
____ bed ____ cow ____ rope ____ kitten

Score _____

SUBTEST 7: **Sequencing**
Score 3 points for each picture correctly sequenced. Total Possible: 9

_____ First Picture _____ Next Picture _____ Last Picture

Score _____

SUBTEST 8: **Opposites**
Score 1 point for each correct response. Total Possible: 9

____ cold ____ little ____ dirty ____ old ____ pull
____ bad ____ short ____ full ____ close

Score _____

Score Summary

VISUAL SKILLS	CHILD'S SCORE	TOTAL SCORE POSSIBLE
SUBTEST 1	_____	13
SUBTEST 2	_____	13
SUBTEST 3	_____	8
SUBTEST 4	_____	12
VISUAL SKILLS TOTAL	_____	46

AUDITORY SKILLS	CHILD'S SCORE	TOTAL SCORE POSSIBLE
SUBTEST 5	_____	9
SUBTEST 6	_____	9
AUDITORY SKILLS TOTAL	_____	18

COGNITIVE SKILLS	CHILD'S SCORE	TOTAL SCORE POSSIBLE
SUBTEST 7	_____	9
SUBTEST 8	_____	9
COGNITIVE SKILLS TOTAL	_____	18

TOTAL INVENTORY	CHILD'S SCORE	TOTAL SCORE POSSIBLE
VISUAL SKILLS	_____	46
AUDITORY SKILLS	_____	18
COGNITIVE SKILLS	_____	18
TOTAL SCORE	_____	82

PASS _____ FAIL _____

Appendix E
Identified Students

Student	Slosson	Colors	Sounds	Up. Case	Low. Case	TPLS
A	62.5/129	1/12	2/21	15/26	9/26	14/20
B	59/123	0/12	8/21	24/26	19/26	17/20
C	57.5/121	2/12	2/21	22/26	14/26	16/20
D	67.5/137	0/12	4/21	17/26	5/26	13/20
E	53/114	1/12	0/21	18/26	13/26	14/20
F	71.5/145	0/12	8/21	26/26	14/26	18/20
G	67.5/137	0/12	8/21	25/26	21/26	12/20
H	80/161	6/12	11/21	25/26	23/26	11/20
I	70/142	1/12	1/21	15/26	20/26	18/20
J	81/163	5/12	9/21	26/26	20/26	17/20
K	69.5/141	2/12	9/21	22/26	18/26	19/20

Appendix F
Mini Lesson Plan

AM Language Block Activities

1. Auditory Discrimination: Teachers take turns saying words with the days sound at random. Students make guesses as to what our theme is (letter/sound)
2. Lindamood Bell instruction is given for the letter(s)
3. Related story is read to the students. They can give a thumbs up each time they hear our special sound. Re-read with the children's help
4. Related song is introduced. Children help sing and act it out
5. Daily Oral Phonics for the related letter
6. Introduction and instruction of puppet or writing activity and office time activity

Pm Possible Language Activities

1. Brainstorming of related words
2. Handwriting activities

    Example for the letter Ll

    a. Lacing in letter L
    b. Lemon/lime venn diagram comparison
    c. Scavenger hunt for things that begin with Ll
3. Skill Drills are used throughout the day

Appendix G
Letters and Sounds
by
Lindamood-Bell

Teach all consonants before vowels. See it, hear it , feel it.
KEY: Language Stimulates Sensori-cognitive processing
Ask questions to make the child identify what he feels and then give it a language label.
Procedure:

1. Always ask " how did you make the sound?" first.
2. Give visual reinforcement with pictures and demonstrations
3. Give the letter name last.

Always give choices when teaching. Wrong answers are good because they enable you to explore how to find the right answer. Ask questions, don't give answers.

Automaticity is the goal. When consonants and vowels are automatic, go on to tracking with two sounds. Teach all the sounds before tracking unless the child is very severe.

Brothers:	**quiet**	**noisy**
Lip Popper	p	b
Tongue Tapper	t	d
Tongue Scraper	k	g
Skinny Sounds	s	z
Lip Coolers	f	v
Tongue Coolers	th	th (voiced)
Fat Sound	sh	zh
Fat Push	ch	j

Cousins:

Front Nose Sound	m	Noisy
Middle Nose Sound	n	" "

Back Nose Sound	ng	" "

Wind Sounds (least to most wind) :

	w	Noisy
	h	Quiet
	wh	Quiet
Front Tongue Lifter	l	Noisy
Back Tongue Lifter	r	Noisy
Borrowers	c y x qu	

Appendix H
Auditory Discrimination Activities for Targeted Phonemes

1. IN/OUT GAME: The teacher presents chart paper with two columns; one for IN and one for OUT and begins by asking students for a word that is "in". If the word given begins with the targeted phoneme it is recorded under the IN column; if the word does not begin with the targeted phoneme it is recorded under the OUT column. This continues until children discover the pattern of the "in" words (that they all begin with the targeted phoneme). This is a fun way to introduce the phoneme to be targeted.

2. Beginning/Middle/End Train Game: The teacher presents a train with an engine, car and caboose. The teacher then shows a Peabody Picture Card, says the word, and has children repeat the word. The children are then to decide if they hear the targeted phoneme at the beginning, middle or end of the word. The card is placed beneath the appropriate part of the train. The Peabody Card can be turned over to the written word and children can confirm the position of the sound in the word.

3. Sound/Not Sound Game: The teacher makes two columns on a pocket chart; i.e.. "P" and "Not P". After the introduction of the targeted phoneme, a picture of a word is shown to the children. The teacher says the word and the children repeat it. They then must decide if the word begins with the targeted sound or doesn't begin with the targeted sound. They can vote "thumbs up" or "thumbs down" and then place the card in the appropriate column. Again, the back of the card can be read to confirm the decision. The teacher should choose words that begin with sounds that are difficult to discriminate auditorally; i.e.. /f/&/th/, /w/&/r/, /s/&/th/, /r/&/l/, /p/&/b/, /t/&/k/, etc..

4. Sound Segmentation Train: The teacher presents children with a worksheet that has three columns; an engine, car and caboose. Under each train part are lines for writing. The teacher dictates CVC words and the children are to write each sound on the appropriate line. The words can contain the digraphs as well as diphthongs as long as there are just three sounds.

Appendix I
Daily Oral Phonics

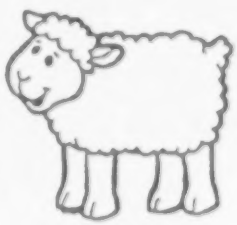
NAME _____

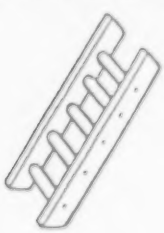
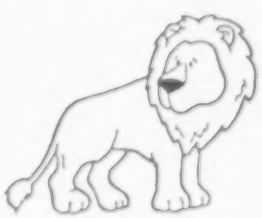
Objective: Associate the letter l with /l/

Hear the sound at the beginning of
It is the sound of l.

lamp

Name these things.
Where do you hear the sound of l?
Write l on the first or last line.



Draw two more pictures of things whose names begin with l.

Daily Phonics, Level I
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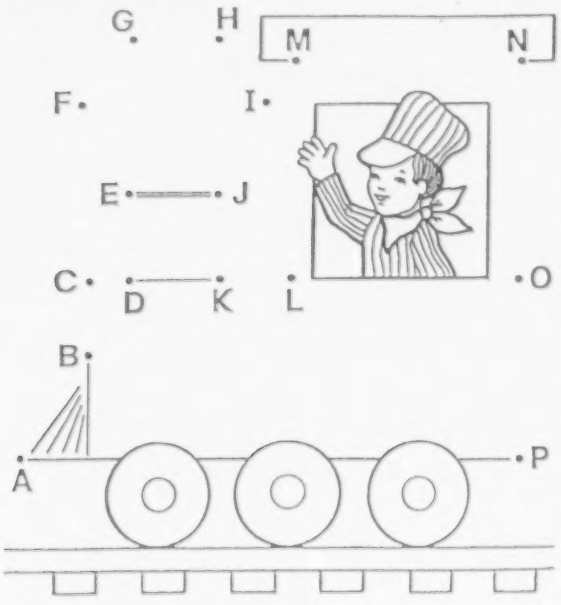
Appendix J
Office Time Samples

On the Track

Connect the dots from A to P. Color.



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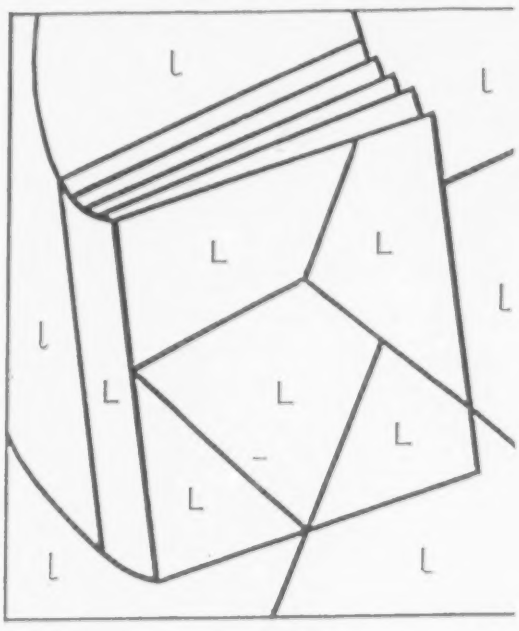
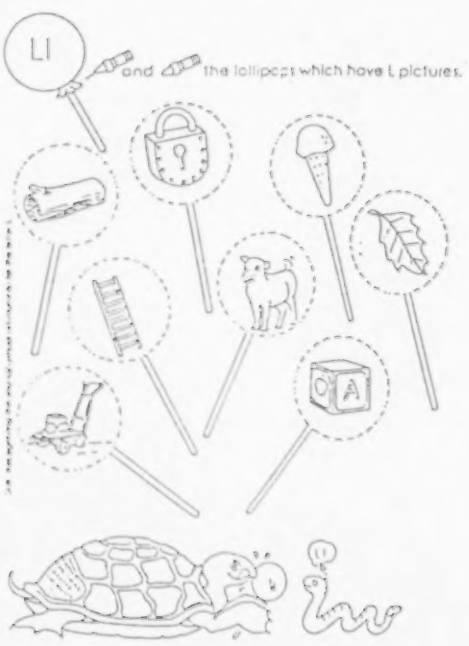
16

Color the spaces with L purple.
Color the spaces with l yellow.



29

FS-8173 Kin—Alphabet Hidden Pic



Appendix K
Skill Drills

1. Line up if you have the /t/ sound or the letter t in your name

2. Make two lines; teacher asks for a word that starts/ends with the /t/ sound or with the letter t. Only the first two children can answer. Correct answer lines up(etc.) other child tries again. Continue through the line.

3. Sound or letter bingo. Use pre made or child can put their own choice of letters on a bingo card. Card size can vary. Play like B-I-N-G-O.

4. I Spy something in the room that begins/ends with the /t/sound or the letter t. They need to figure "it" out by asking yes/no questions. Ex. Is it big? Is it blue?

5. Make a list by drawing pictures or writing words of things that begin/end with the /t/ sound or the letter t. Give time to work. Take turns giving answers. Can record on chart paper.

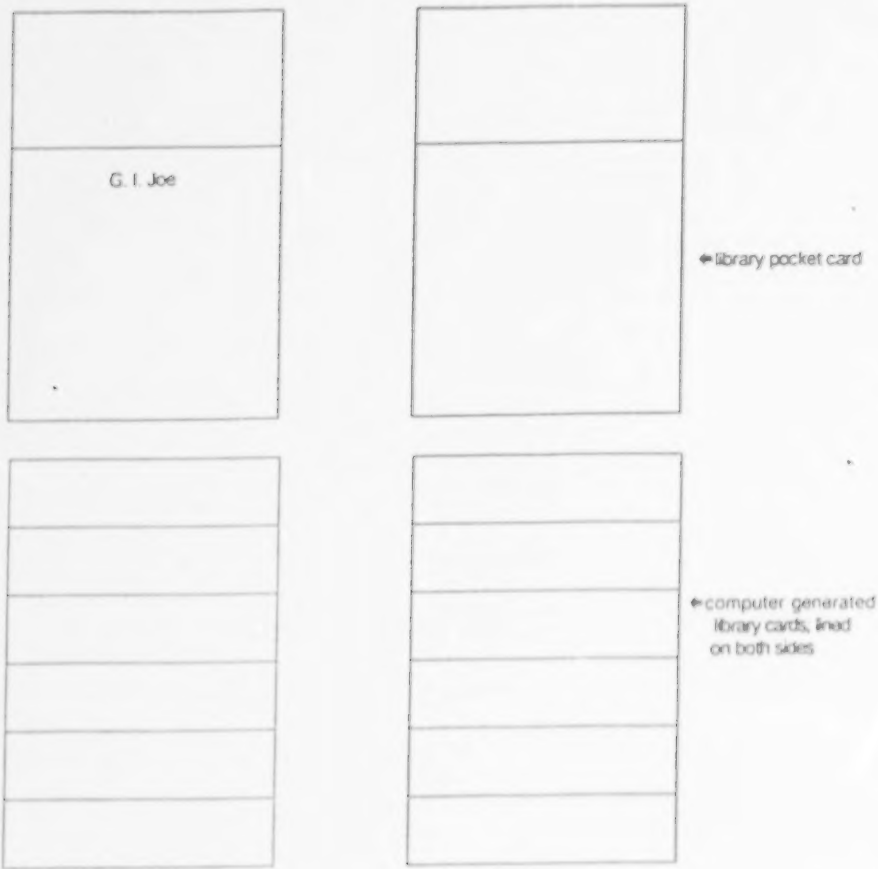
6. I Spy using books. Children are given a sound or letter(s) to look for in the book. They record their findings during the time limit. Again this can be recorded on chart paper. This can also be done in pairs or small groups.

7. Alphabet Card Concentration: Two decks of cards with upper or lower case letters on them...store bought or hand-made; Usually one-half of each deck is used at a time. Make sure to have matching letters from each deck. Shuffle and place all cards face down four rows across with six in each row. Turn up two cards; if a match pull them out. Continue till all cards are matched. Can be played alone or in pairs.

8. Alphabet Order: Use blocks, magnets etc. that have letters on them. Children arrange them in the correct order.

9. ABC Name Order: Groups of four/five children line themselves up according to first or last names.

Appendix L
Library Pocket Chart



Steps:

1. Write student name on library pocket card
   (affix labels for years of use)
2. Glue cards onto tag board
3. One library card is placed in each pocket
   (extras in separate pocket)
4. Student chooses book, gets their card, writes book
   title on the line(may use more than one line) returns
   card to pocket
5. Next day at "library time" students get their card and cross
   off------ the title ONLY if they brought the book back

Steps 4 & 5 are continued daily. When a card is filled on both sides it can be placed in the child's reading/writing folder for future reference. They then retrieve a new card.

Appendix M
Parent Home Reading Reference Guide

Below you will find some pre/during and post reading activities.

Pre-reading:

1. Parent asks: What do you think this book will be about from looking at the picture?

2. As above but, Where is the story taking place?

3. Have your child locate the title of the book. Tell beginning/ending sounds of words. Building up to them reading the title.

4. Locate the authors and illustrators name.

Now you are ready for a first reading of the book. Have you child go through and do a picture reading of it to you. Now go back and read it aloud to your child (see step 1 below).

During Reading:

1. Please put your finger under the words as you read. This helps the children see that groups of letters form words, we read from left to right and top to bottom.

2. Have them find the end marks (. ? !).

3. Ask: What do you think will happen next?

4. When is the story taking place: past, present or future? How do you know?

At any time during the third reading of the story the following can be asked:

- Find the beginning of the sentence. How do you know it is?
- Find a word that begins with the sound of _____ or the letter _____. Can you read the word?
- Find the word _____.

Post Reading:

1. What part of the story did you like best and why?

2. What were the main events?

3. Would you like to visit a place like this?

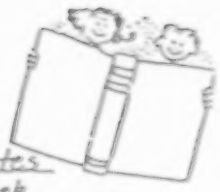
4. Name characters; choose your favorite and tell why.

5. Was there a problem in the story? How was is solved?

The last reading is helping the child or letting them read it aloud all by themselves.

Remember — this is just a guide with ideas. You do not need to do each one every night. The most important would be for you to read to your child each day.

Appendix N
Home Reading Log



Home Reading Record

Reading Goal: (time you plan to spend reading at home) 50 minutes each week

for the next month.

Date/Fecha	Book Title / Titulo del Libro	Comments: Comentarios

Parent's Signature _____

Appendix O
Book Buddy Reading Guide

Below you will find things that can be discussed with your buddy. You do not need to go through all of them. Although, two activities from each side must be completed each week.

Side A

Pre-reading

1. From looking at the cover, have the first grader tell you what they think the book is going to be about.

2. Again from looking at the cover ask the first grader to locate or read the title of the book.

3. Still looking at the cover have the first grader tell where they think the story is taking place.

4. First grader locates the authors name/illustrator names.

Side B

During/Post-reading
Fourth grade buddy asks:

1. Where is the story taking place (setting)?

2. Name some/all/or favorite character and tell why

3. What kind of story is it? fictional, true, etc.

4. What do you think will happen next?

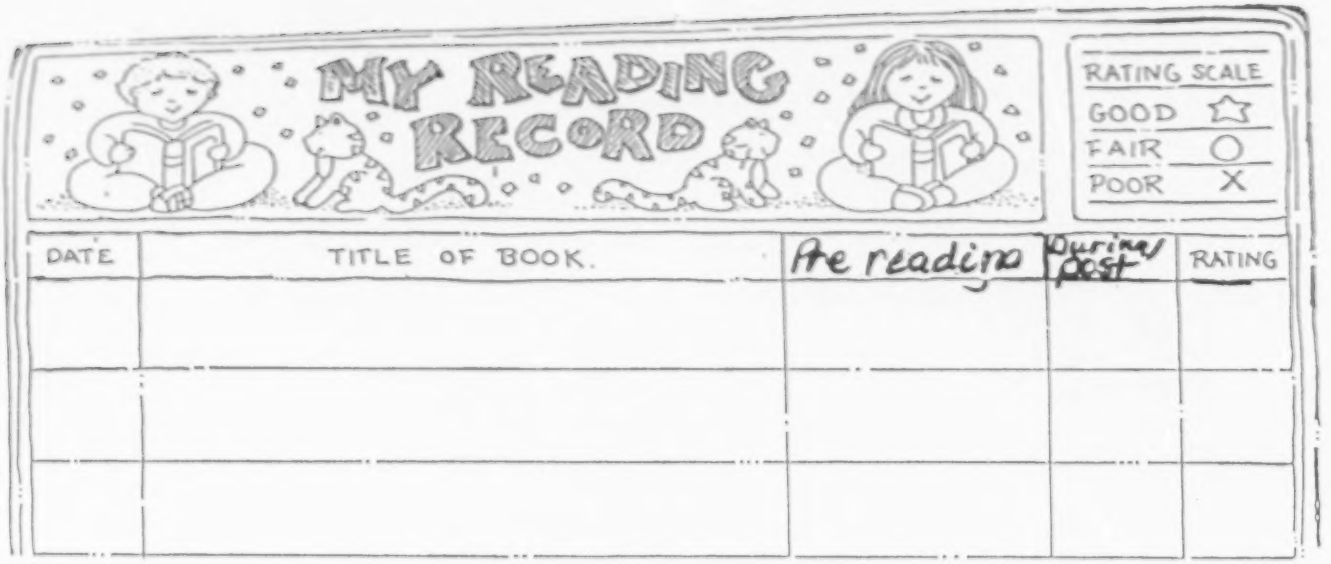
5. Was there a problem (conflict)? If so, how was it solved?

6. Did you like this book? If so, why?

7. Together discuss how you might change the story.

Put the activities on index cards and laminate for long term use.

Appendix P
Book Buddy Reading Log



Steps:

1. Title and date are recorded
2. Pre and post reading question numbers are recorded. This helps to ensure a variety is used.
3. Store these in the first graders reading/writing folders for future reference.

Appendix Q
Running Record Instructions

Running Record
Tallying Errors and Self-Corrections

1. Total each line separately going across the line of text. If a line is error and SC free, leave the error and SC column blank.

2. An uncorrected substitution, omission, or insertion counts as one error.

house	–	big
home	home	–

3. Unsuccessful multiple attempts on one word count only as one error.

house	here	her.	If eventually SC - no error	house	here	her	SC
home				home			

4. An error on a proper noun is counted only on the first error. Subsequent errors on that proper noun are coded but not tallied.

5. If a work is mispronounced due to a speech problem or a dialect it may be coded but is not an error.

git	squabbit
get	rabbit

6. Repetitions are coded but are not errors. √R √√R √√√R

7. Waits are coded but are not errors. (W)

8. Sounding the first letter is coded but does not count as an error if the work is subsequently read correctly.

t-	√
take	

9. TTA = 1 error - Try That Again is only ued when the child or your coding is very mixed up. [ ] start over.

10. Told = 1 error

w	
eight	T

11. Appeal that is not SC is followed by a Told and is 1 error.

	A		home	
house		YT		T

12. Self-Corrections are not errors, even after an appeal. They are tallied only in the SC column. They arenot included in the error column.

13. Contractions count as 1 error.

I will	I'll
I'll	I will

1 Source: An Observation Survey (1993) Marie M. Clay

Running Record
Tallying Errors and Self-Corrections (continued)

14. Each insertion counts as an error so that you could have more errors than text.

15. Inventing - just write inventing at the top of the page unless just one page was invented - Then count each error.

16. Skipped line - each word counts as an error.

17. Skipped page - sbutract the number of words on that page. Do not count as as error.

18. "Sounding Out" responses are coded by lower case letters followed by a dash n-o-t. This incorrect response is 1 error.
not

19. Speling the word is coded by upper case letters followed by a dash N-O-T. This incorrect response is 1 error.
not

2 Source: An Observation Survey (1993) Marie M. Clay

CALCULATION AND CONVERSION TABLE

Error Rate	Percent Accuracy	
1:200	99.5	
1:100	99	
1: 50	98	
1: 35	97	Independent
1: 25	96	
1: 20	95	
1: 17	94	
1: 14	93	
1: 12.5	92	Instructional
1: 11.75	91	
1: 10	90	
1: 9	89	
1: 8	87.5	
1: 7	85	Frustration
1: 6	83	
1: 5	80	
1: 4	75	
1:3	66	
1:2	50	

USE OF CHART

Divide running words by errors

Round that number to the nearest whole number (e.g. 9.5 round to 10, 9.2 round to 9)

Locate the ratio on the chart

Always go down to the next lower number if he exact ratio is not on the chart (e.g. if your ratio is 1:15, you would go to 1:14 on the chart)

Locate the corresponding percent of accuracy

CALCULATIONS

RW - Running Words
E - Errors
SC - Self-corrections

ERROR RATE

$\frac{\text{Running Words}}{\text{Errors}}$

e.g. $\frac{150}{15}$ - 1:10

$\frac{RW}{E}$ - Ratio 1:_____

ACCURACY

$100-\frac{E}{RW} \times \frac{100}{1}$

$100-\frac{15}{150} \times \frac{100\%}{1}$ — or use chart

- 90%

SELF-CORRECTION RATE

$\frac{E+SC}{SC}$

$\frac{15+5}{5}$ - Ratio 1:4

SC Rate:
1:1 - 1:2 excellent
1:3 - 1:5 good